



## SUGGESTED PROTOCOLS FOR AN EFFICIENT COLLABORATIVE SESSION<sup>1</sup>

For a proper, effective, professional and efficient collaborative session, we should agree to/understand the following:

### **Agenda and use of our time**

1. We will adhere to the agreed-upon agenda and agreements about time limits.
2. We will expedite the meeting process, stay on topic and not cause delay.

### **Communicating effectively and respectfully**

3. We give integrity our first priority and thereby support open, direct and candid conversations.
4. One person speaks at a time; we agree there will be no side conversations, interruptions or cell phone calls.
5. We agree that it is crucial that everyone have a reasonable chance to be heard and to hear others. We agree not to dominate the conversation.
6. We will be brief and speak to the point. We will avoid repetition - If you agree with a prior comment – just say so.
7. We speak to explain our thinking, and listen to understand how others think.
8. We work in conversation - not debate.
9. We will respectfully, patiently and professionally address one another, even if their interests are not consistent with our own interests.
10. Where feasible, we will reciprocate concessions and return favors.
11. We will avoid dogmatism, posturing, emotionalism, rudeness, blame, and threats (i.e., criticize ideas, not people).
12. We will not unnecessarily or lightly impugn the motivation of another party.
13. We will not engage in unfair tricks or actions designed to mislead.

### **Working together to find action oriented solutions**

14. We will act in good faith and commit the needed time to these tasks.
15. We will work toward finding the needed actions and discussing how to implement them effectively.

---

<sup>1</sup> Drafted by Joseph P McMahon as modified from Milton R Wessel's *Rule of Reason*, 1976, Howard Raiffa's *The Art of Negotiation*, 1982, Fred Ikle's *How Nations Negotiate* 1987, David Straus', *Managing Meeting to Build Consensus*, The Consensus Building Handbook.

16. We will regard disagreements as problems to be solved rather than victories to be won.
17. We will remain open minded, and loosen our grip on our favorite solutions so we can listen to the ideas of others.
18. We will avoid judging ideas prematurely, and look for the need or interest that underlies the ideas presented by others.
19. We will look for options to address not only our interests but also those of the other parties.
20. When proposals or ideas remain challenging for me, I will look for ways to improve the proposal.

**Understanding and embracing diversity**

21. We recognize the value of diverse perspectives and value our complementary strengths.
22. We will ensure views of less powerful, less vocal stakeholders are given a voice.
23. We know diversity has many meanings, including diversity of views, culture and power.
24. We are aware of power asymmetries and problematic power differences will be resolved or mediated.